



SAFETY ACTION PLAN

Georgia Department of Transportation



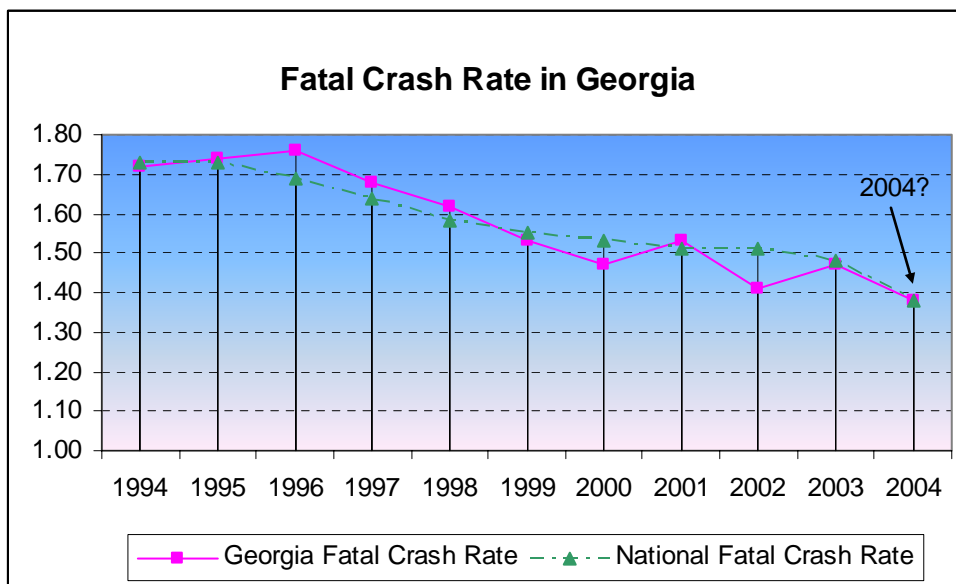
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Increasing traffic volumes, an aging population, aggressive driving, speeding and driver attentiveness all create new challenges for transportation engineers. Many of these driver characteristics can be addressed with engineering related solutions, while others involve education and enforcement. Recognizing the need to increase the focus on these efforts, management of the Department supported the development of this Safety Action Plan. Additionally, the Department has committed Department resources to be an early implementer in creating a Comprehensive Safety Plan using the Integrated Safety Management Process. Management has also agreed to participate in another safety related effort entitled Lead State Initiative, participating in the Lane Departure category.

The Division of Operations will be taking the lead in developing the Comprehensive Safety Plan that will involve enforcement, the Governor's Office of Highway Safety (GOHS), and other units of State and Federal government. The effort is expected to involve a complete cross section of the Department to participate in Task Teams to address identified safety efforts. The program is now underway and should be in full operating mode during 2005.

This Safety Action Plan has been developed in response to the Chief Engineer's directive to identify and implement engineering related safety efforts now, while complementing the longer range efforts that will be developed over the upcoming months. The Department has already adopted the AASHTO goal of a fatality rate of 1.0 per 100 Million Vehicle Miles Traveled (MVMT) by 2008. This ambitious goal coupled with the Department's internal strategic goal of reducing the total of number of crashes by 2 % annually requires action by all units within the Department.



The Department's fatal crash rate has shown a steady decrease over the past 10 years primarily due to the increase in travel. Tragically, the total number of annual fatalities continues to remain constant. While the Department continues to track the national

average for fatal crash rates, it has to strive to lower the actual number of fatalities and severe injuries to our citizens. Georgia's fatal crash rate ranked 19th lowest nationally and second lowest in the southeast, trailing only Virginia in 2002, but crept back up slightly in 2003. Although the final numbers for 2004 are not completely in yet, the early returns are encouraging. The graph above demonstrates how closely Georgia tracks the national average, but it also highlights how far we have to go to achieve the 1.0 rate by 2008.

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Identifying programs that may potentially save lives is the ultimate goal for the Safety Action Plan. Developing the target levels for achieving the 2008 goal is necessary to evaluate the individual program initiatives and the projected progress towards the goal. This has been achieved using the following model, based on the assumption that travel in Georgia will continue to increase at the same rate for the next four (4) calendar years. To achieve the goal of 1.0 fatality per 100 million vehicle miles of travel, the effective number of lives saved will need to be 238 annually using the last complete year of data (2003) by the end of 2008. The Safety Action Plan has identified a plan expected to save approximately 178 lives. Enforcement, education and other programs will need to be implemented to reach the desired goal.

Table 1-1: Annual Fatal & Fatal Crash Rates in Georgia

		Fatal Accidents			
		Accidents		Fatalities	
Year	Annual Vehicle Miles (Millions)	Number	100 MVM	Number	100 MVM
1998	96,607	1,420	1.47	1,579	1.63
1999	98,913	1,317	1.33	1,514	1.53
2000	104,723	1,384	1.32	1,548	1.48
2001	107,974	1,475	1.37	1,656	1.53
2002	108,306	1,368	1.26	1,531	1.41
2003	109,303	1,432	1.31	1,610	1.47
2004	111,083	1,344	1.21	1,582	1.42
2005	113,795	1,285	1.13	1,445	1.27
2006	116,507	1,223	1.05	1,375	1.18
2007	119,218	1,156	0.97	1,299	1.09
2008	121,930	1,085	0.89	1,219	1.00

AASHTO Facts

- The current crash projections are unacceptable: 1 in 84 children will die violently in a highway crash during his or her lifetime; 6 in 10 will be injured many of them more than once. We must not be lulled into complacency by day-to-day statistics. Existing efforts are not acceptable.
- The goal of the AASHTO Strategic Highway Safety Plan is to reduce the annual number of highway deaths by 5,000 to 7,000 and to do so cost effectively and in a manner acceptable to the general public.
- Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death among Americans 1-34 years old. According to the U.S. Department of Transportation, the total societal cost of crashes exceeds \$200 billion annually. Contributing to the death toll are alcohol, speed, lack of seat belt use and other problematic driver behaviors. Death rates vary widely by vehicle type, driver age and gender, and other factors.
- 42,643 people died in motor vehicle crashes in 2003. This is 4 percent fewer than in 1975, but 9 percent more than the low point in 1992. These deaths occurred in 38,252 crashes involving 58,512 motor vehicles. In the last 12 years, the total number of fatalities has fluctuated in a fairly narrow range, from 39,250 to 43,005.

